

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) No, Sir. However, due to incessant rain since last fortnight, some pot holes have developed which are being attended to and the traffic is flowing.

(b) National Highways are being kept in traffic worthy condition within available resources.

Agreement between India and U.S.A

872. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH BHATI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any agreement has been signed between India and U.S.A. recently in the field of Transport;

(b) if so, the terms and conditions of this agreement; and

(c) the date from which this agreement is likely to be effected?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) to (c) The Government of India and the Department of Transportation USA, have signed a Memorandum of Intent to identify the objectives of a possible agreement on collaboration between the two countries in transportation, science and technology.

Relaxation in Income-Tax for Private Sector

873. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to provide relaxation in income tax on investment made in road construction section in order to encourage private sector participation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the date from which the above decision is likely to be made effective?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Under Section 80(1)(A) of the Income-Tax Act entrepreneurs operating infrastructure facilities which include roads, have been given:—

(i) 100% income-tax exemption on profits for the five years.

(ii) 30% income-tax concession on profits thereafter for the next five years.

(iii) Such deduction to run for a continuous period of 10 years out of 12 fiscal years at the assessee's choice after starting of the facility.

(iv) 40% of the profit from infrastructure deductible under Section 36(i)(viii) of the aforesaid Act for financial institutions providing long term finance to defined infrastructure sector including roads.

(c) These have already been made effective.

[English]

Airport at Raichur in Karnataka

874. SHRI RAJA RANGAPPA NAIK : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airport Authority of India have surveyed for opening of airport at Raichur in Karnataka recently:

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The feasibility study carried out by Airports Authority of India (AAI) team has indicated that a runway of dimensions 4500 ft. x 150 ft. can be constructed for operation of 50 seater aircraft. This airport belongs to the Government of Karnataka and it is for the State Government to take up the upgradation of the airport.

[Translation]

Striking Down of Appeal

875. SHRI SHANTILAL PARSHOTAMDAS PATEL : **SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH** :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Kendriya Vidyalayon mein vivekadhin kote sey daakhile ke appeal Khaarij" appearing in the Hindi daily 'Jansatta' dated April 17, 1997; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.